

Koyon

THE MENLOVE SUBDIVISION

Architecture 522
Professor Peter Goss

Carla Black
08 December 1992

The Menlove subdivision was developed by Roy A. Menlove, a local contractor. The subdivision, located in Provo, Utah, consists of 37 lots. The lots are situated on portions of three streets, 700 East Street, 800 East Street, and 560 North Street.¹ The physical property was acquired by Menlove in 1941. It was zoned for development in March of 1943.²

Each lot is approximately the same size with the exception of the four lots in Royal Circle which are larger than the others. The average lot is 55' by 125'. The homes are setback 35 feet.

The street patterns for most of Provo in 1943 were set up in a grid iron configuration. The street pattern for this subdivision is no exception. 700 East and 800 East are perpendicular to 560 North. Royal Circle³ forms a cul-de-sac in between the two east streets.⁴

The Menlove Subdivision was built as part of the National Defense Housing Program. In 1941 the National Housing Agency allocated a substantial sum of money to finance new homes and

¹Refer to the plat map, diagram 1. The development begins on 800 East Street between 420 and 560 North, the houses on both sides of the street belong to this development. Only the houses on the South side of 560 North between 700 and 900 East, including Royal Circle, a cul-de-sac, and four lots on 700 East, at a right angle to 560 North, belong to the development.

²See photograph 1.

³See photograph 2.

⁴See the plat map of the Menlove Subdivision. Page A.

to remodel already existing ones to house the employees of defense related industrial facilities. These homes were to be built near the industrial areas that were being used to aid in the victory of World War II.

Columbia Steel built a plant to manufacture steel on the shores of Utah Lake in Utah County. The steel manufacturing complex was financed, at great expense, by the United States Government. Even though approximately 2000 men went to war, about 1200 experienced steel workers had to be brought in. This influx in population placed Utah County in a critical housing shortage. As a result of the housing shortage, the Federal Housing Administration (F.H.A.) allocated funds for 1200 housing units to be built between 1941 and 1943.⁵ The United States government allowed private contractors, like Menlove, to build most of the permanent homes.⁶

The F.H.A. set up several requirements for defense homes.⁷ The homes were to be built within close proximity to the defense industries or near reliable commutation sources. The Menlove Subdivision is less than ten miles away from Columbia Steel, now called Geneva Steel Works. Although there was a busing system available to Columbia Steel employees, as well as the Utah Electric Line, which ran from Salt Lake City

⁵Taken from the Federal-State survey. Utah War Area -- Provo Section. April 1943.

⁶See map of Utah County. Page B.

⁷Taken from War Housing. 77th Congress, June 1943.

to Provo to Payson, only a small percentage of the workers took advantage of those methods. "63 % of the employees used private automobiles, 29.7% walked or used more than one method of transportation."⁸ Most of the residents of the Menlove Subdivision owned their own cars but many of them car-pooled.

Another stipulation was that the new housing areas must be built with full infrastructure such as all utilities, including telephone lines. The areas must be near schools, hospitals, and other facilities that are needed as population increases.

The Menlove Subdivision is located near several other earlier residential areas. With assistance from the Community Facility Division of the Federal Work Agency, Menlove was able to provide the area with the needed utility lines. Menlove built the homes within a few blocks of both an elementary and a junior high school. In 1943 Provo was just a small city. The subdivision was only three miles away from a hospital. It is twelve blocks away from University Avenue and Center Street -- what was then the commercial core of the town.

The Speed in which these war-time housing projects were developed was very crucial. It was reported that contractors were able to build approximately 25 units per month.⁹ All 37 units of the Menlove project were constructed by May of 1943.

⁸Figures taken from the Federal-State Survey.

⁹ibid.

The F.H.A. also stipulated that the houses be well-built with a minimum use of materials that would be critical to the needs of the war. Menlove's houses are all wood-framed with wood or shingle-sided exteriors.

In addition to being well-built, it was very important that the homes be pleasant to live in, but at a nominal price. In an interview with Mr. Menlove, he stated that he couldn't remember very much about the design of the homes but all of them sold for \$5,000. The homes in the subdivision are very simple, nondescript houses. The houses are a combination of a compact ranch and a Cape Cod style home. The exteriors have three basic facades that are very similar to one another with only minor distinctions in roof gables, porticos and window arrangements.¹⁰ The main level of the floor plan is very modest at 900 square feet.¹¹ Each home consists of a living room, kitchen, three small bedrooms, and a bathroom. Some of the homes were built with unfinished basements. None of the homes had garages or carports but each had a cement driveway. Curb and gutter and cement sidewalks were provided for each lot, as well as paved streets, by the contractor. Menlove said that it was a mandatory provision that all homes have a well kept front yard with lawn and trees. A deed restriction was set up that prohibited any sort of fencing around the front yard.

¹⁰See photographs, 3, 4, and 5.

¹¹See the floor plan on Page C.

Each lot has a large area in back of the home for a garden and suitable green space for children to play on. The homes on the east side of 800 East Street had an irrigation ditch that ran directly in back of each lot. It could be used for watering lawns and gardens.

Between 487 and 499 North on the west side of 800 east was a paved pathway that led to a playground that Menlove had designed as part of the subdivision.¹² Additional green space, Memorial Park, is just three blocks south of the area.

The F.H.A. also required that all of the original residents of the subdivision work in a defense related occupation. All of the residents of the subdivision worked for Columbia Steel or on the construction of the many rail roads that were needed to supply Columbia Steel with transportation services. In 1943 there were three major railway systems that serviced Columbia Steel: Denver & Rio Grande, Western, and Union Pacific railroads.¹³

Because of the shortage of homes in Provo, as in all of Utah County, advertising wasn't necessary to sell the homes in the subdivision. In an interview with Leona Sherry, an original resident of the Menlove Subdivision, she recalled that she and her husband, George, one of the railway workers, were on a waiting list to get into one of the homes.

¹²See photograph 6.

¹³Taken from the Fed.-State Survey.

Lenna Harris, another resident of the subdivision, reminisced at how lovely the new subdivision was when she and her family moved into it. Because the subdivision had been built in such a new area of the city the property was very open, it had a wonderful view of the mountains. Both residents agreed that soon after the war was over their pleasant little subdivision was still comfortable but it had become very crowded.

After World War II ended Menlove added two additional subdivisions to the area.¹⁴ The *Menlove Addition* continued south from 420 North on 800 East Street and ended at 300 North Street. The *Ray Addition* began at 350 North on 800 East Street and moved east to 900 East Street. By 1955, 900 East Street had become a small commercial area. A grocery store, a gasoline-filling station, a bank and a few other small retail shops had been filled in between 560 and 350 North.

Today, most of the residents of the Menlove Subdivision are students who are attending Brigham Young University. Most of the additions that have been added to the homes have been to accommodate them. Many homes have been extended, mainly from the back, although one home has had an additional storey added to the top. Basements have been remodeled into separate apartments. Garages have been added as well as covered

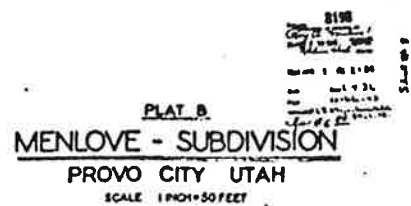
¹⁴See the county plat map Page D.

carports. What was once a playground is now part of a large apartment complex located on 700 East Street.

Today, the Menlove Subdivision is just one of many subdivisions in the Provo area. The houses look like many other houses that were built during the 1940's and 1950's. But in 1943, when there was such a huge demand for a place to live, the Menlove Subdivision was a very nice place to live. As Menlove himself stated, "I didn't have any specific reason for placing the subdivision where it is. I just thought it was pretty property, so I bought it."¹⁵

¹⁵Interview with Roy A. Menlove. *date?*

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Page 2 of 2

On the 27th day of March, 1944, approximately 1,000 persons, including the author, were taken to the concentration camp at Buchenwald, Germany, where they were held for several months.

ITF MEMBERSHIP: 4,000,000

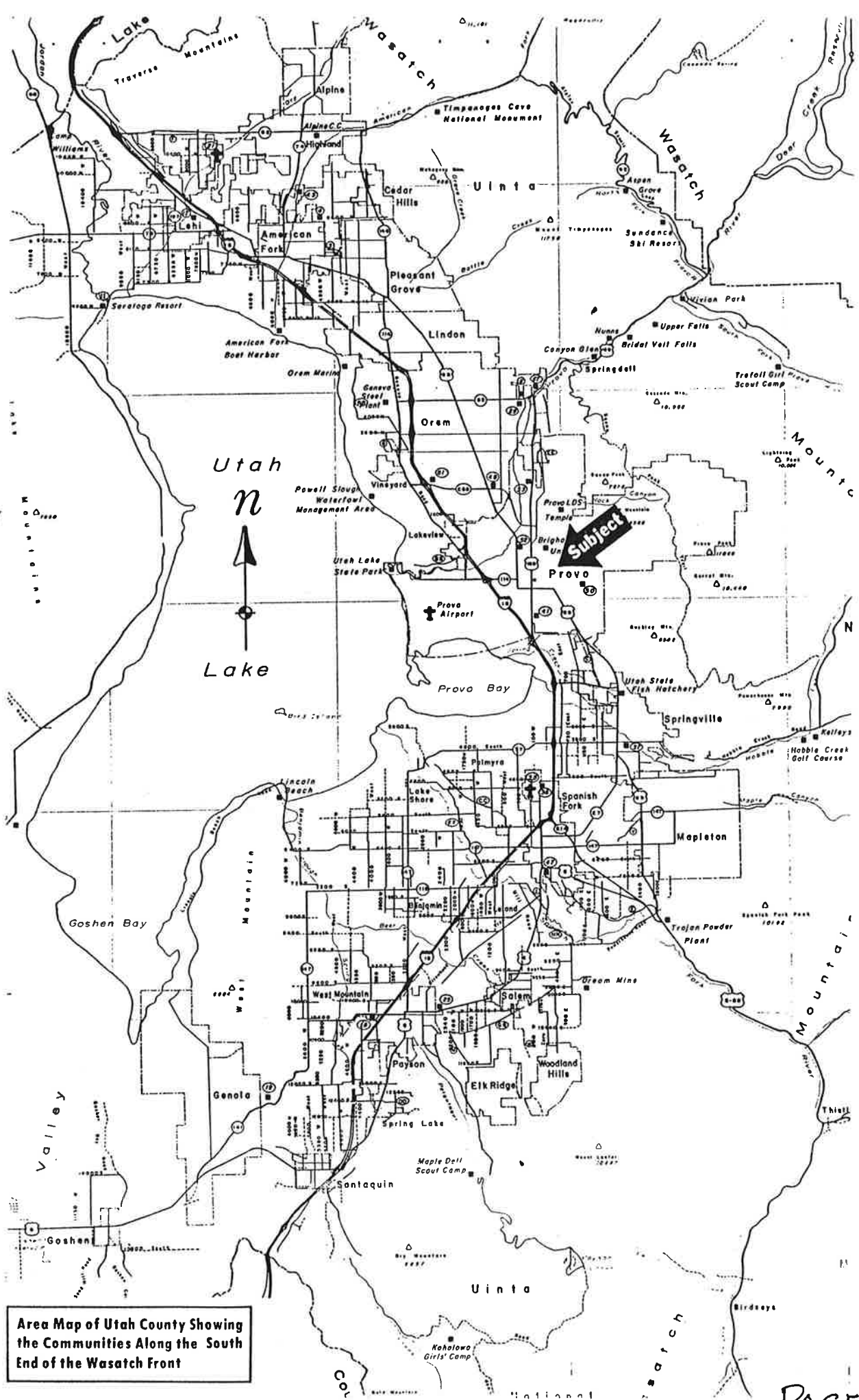
2. 10. 1941

163 101

③8 A. Ricardo A. Roberts ETAL JR 40270-77

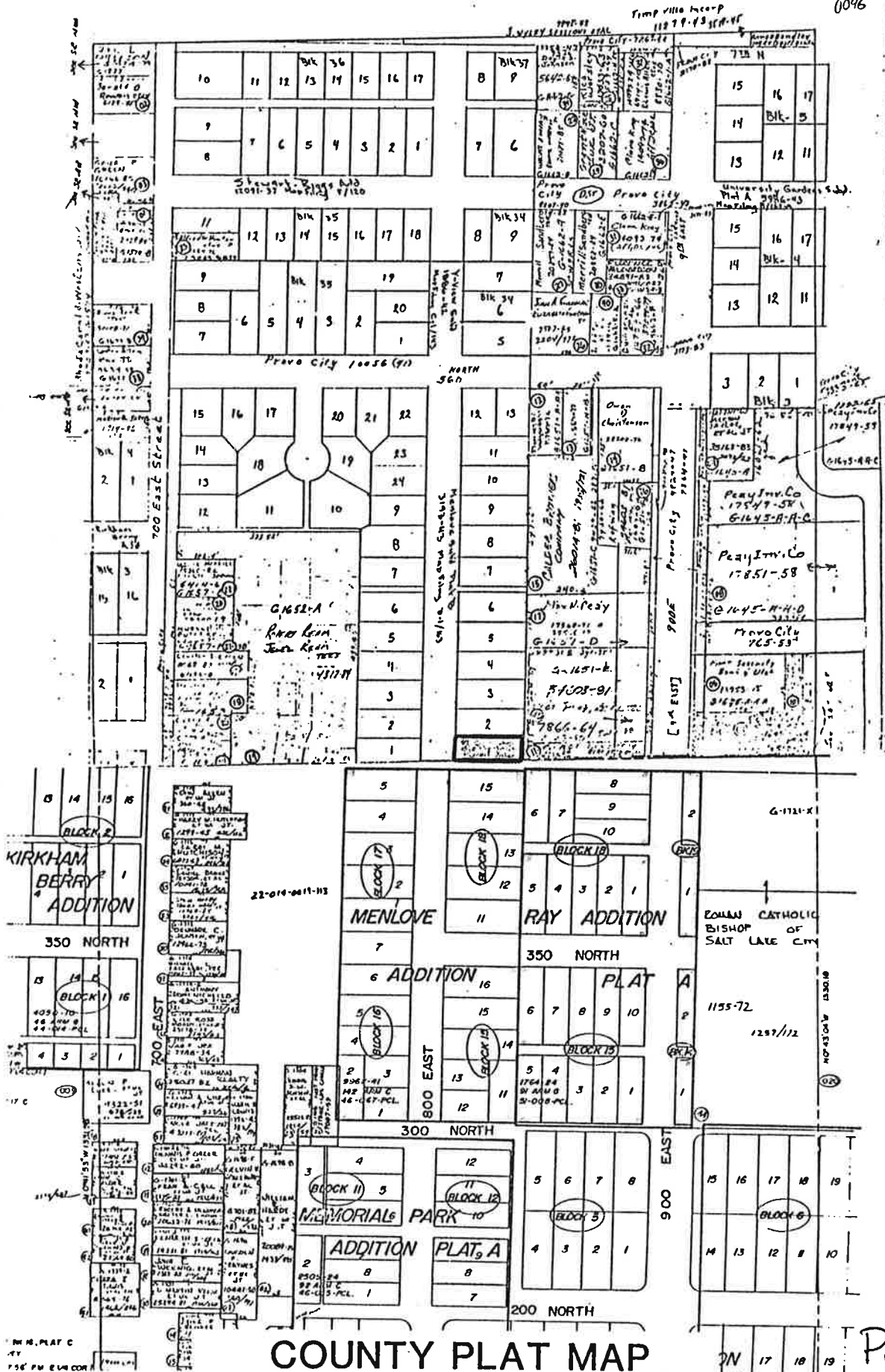
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Map 163
Arm 'D-1

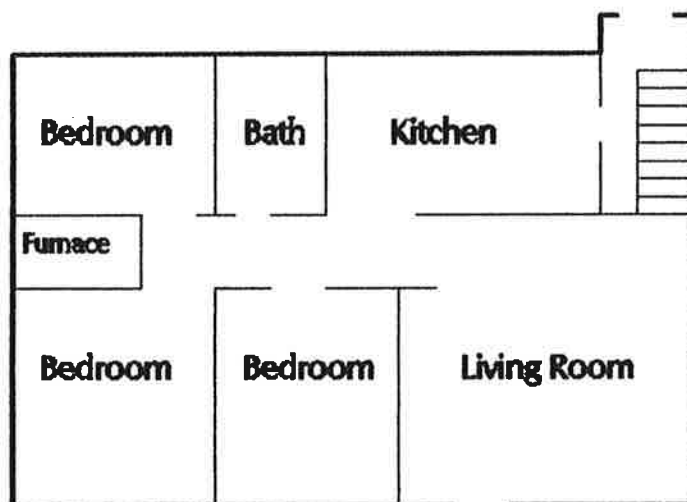


UTAH COUNTY PLATS

SW 1/4 NE 1/4 Section 6 Township 7 South, Range 3 East 22-014-Parcel
Tax Unit 110 0046



Floor Plan

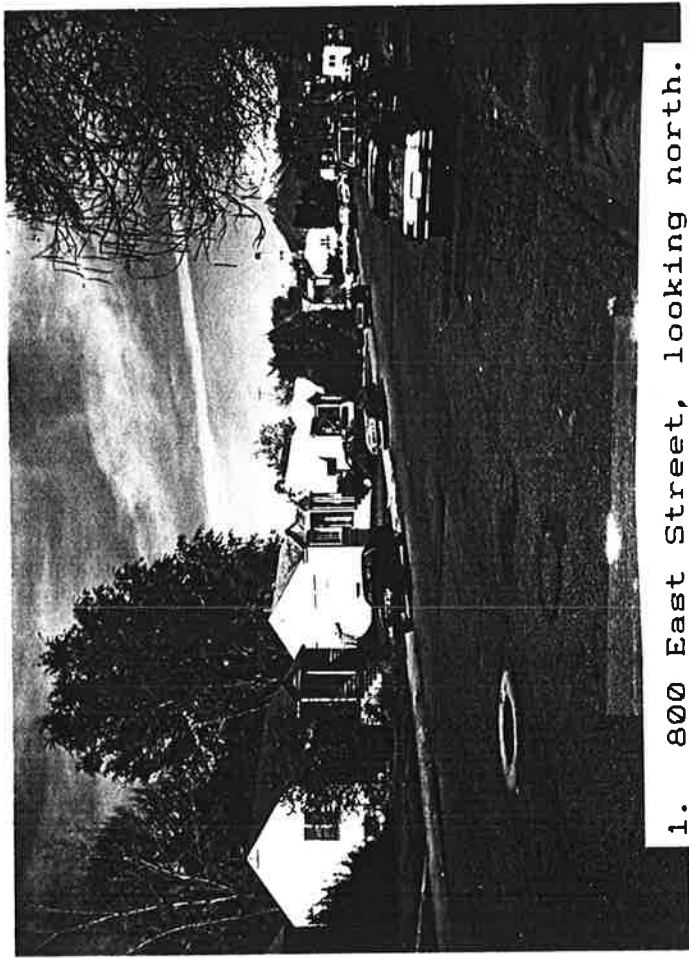


Scale Bar

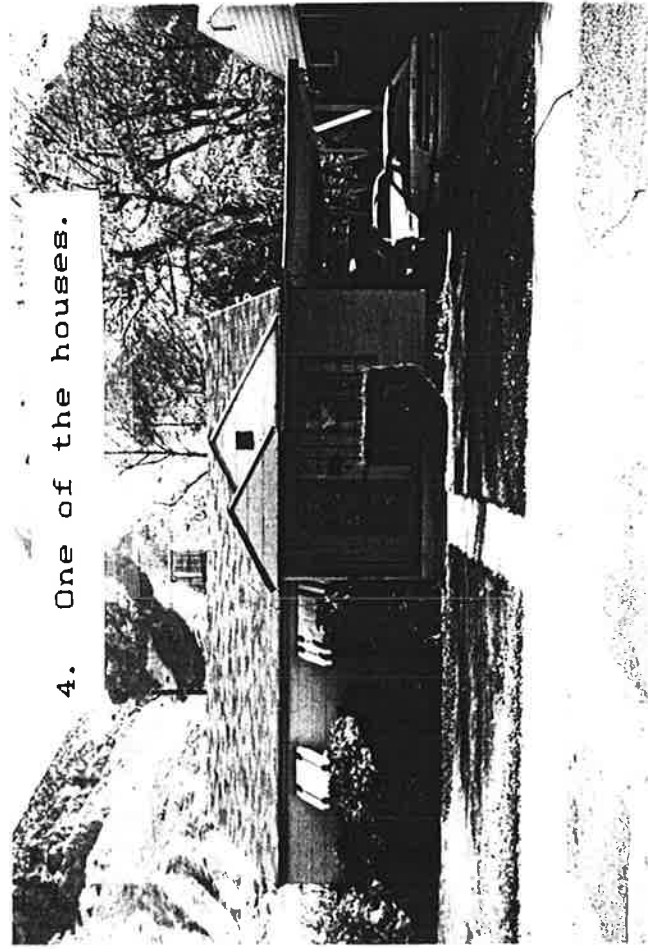


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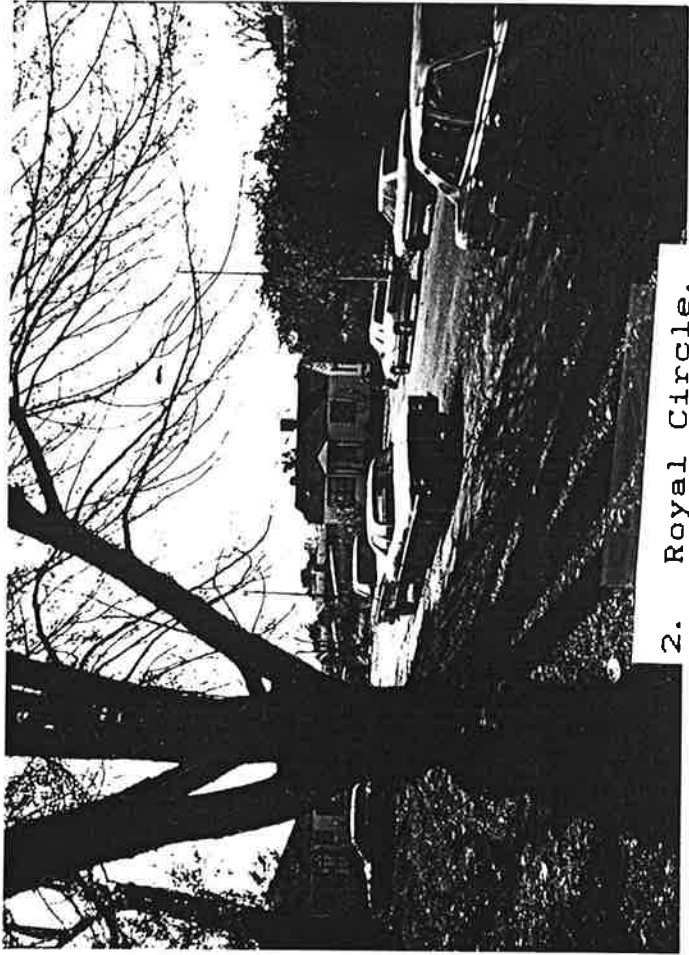
1. Kenneth L. Cannon II. A Very Eligible Place--Provo And Orem, An Illustrated History. 1987 Windsor Publications, Inc. USA
2. Federal Regional Advisory Council for Defense, Health and Welfare Services. Federal-State Survey. Utah War Area--Provo Section. April 1943.
3. War Housing. Seventy-Seventh Session of Congress, June 1942.
4. Interview with Lenna Harris. November 8, 1992.
5. Interview with Ray A. Menlove. November 21, 1992.
6. Interview with Leona Sherry. November 8, 1992.



1. 800 East Street, looking north.



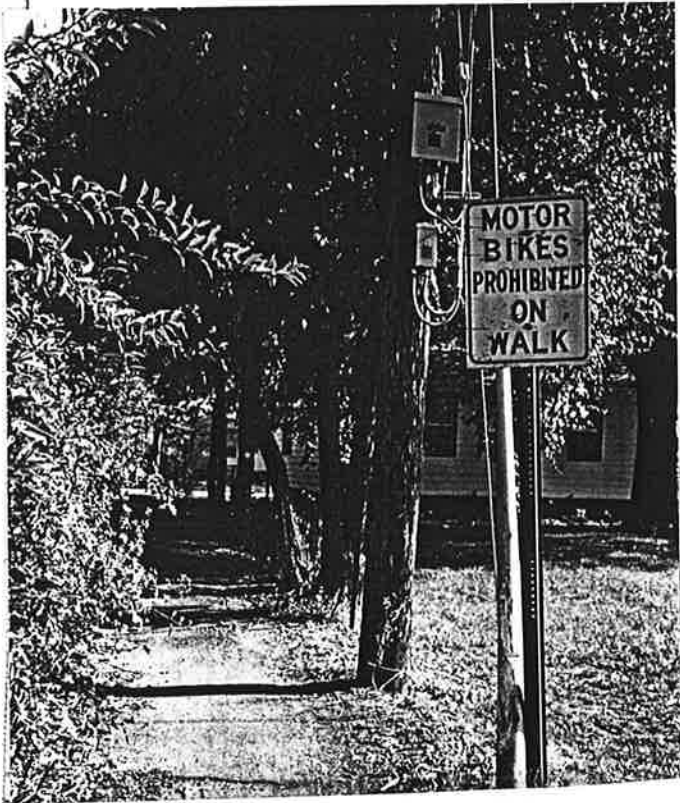
4. One of the houses.



2. Royal Circle.

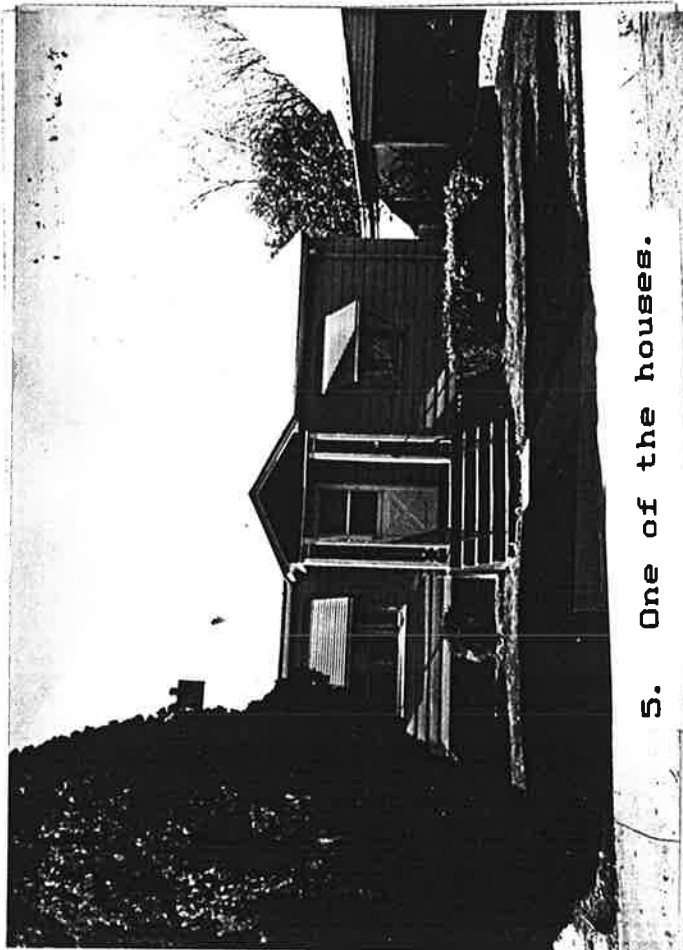


3. One of the houses.



6. Looking at the path from where the playground once was.

420 North 800 East



5. One of the houses.

421 N 800 E